



Testimony on HB821
Career Pathways for Healthcare Workers Program
Position: **FAVORABLE**

To Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Health & Government Operations Committee,

My name is Nina Scroggins. I am a cook at a hospital located in Baltimore County and a member of 1199SEIU, the largest healthcare workers union in the country. I have 10,000 union comrades who live and work in Maryland/DC. I'm testifying to ask you to issue a favorable report on HB821 to create career pathway programs for healthcare workers like me.

Creating opportunities for more workforce training will allow healthcare workers like me to advance in our field and earn higher wages. One time, I wanted to go for a promotion at the facility where I work. They told me I could get the promotion, but my pay rate would stay the same because I did not have one qualification. It made me feel discouraged to hear management say they would accept my extra labor but not give me extra pay due to a technicality. If there were more opportunities for me to get workforce training, I could have accepted that promotion and earned a higher wage.

Short staffing is a huge problem in healthcare right now. We are so overworked and underpaid that people are getting burnt out and quitting, and it is hard to get new people to join the healthcare field. Working short staffed is physically and emotionally exhausting for healthcare workers. I believe if we had more workforce training opportunities, it would be easier to recruit new health care workers and thereby reduce the short staffing crisis.

Healthcare workers deserve to live with dignity and respect. Please vote yes on HB821 so we can advance in our chosen field and earn higher wages. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Nina Scroggins